

FUNDED BY THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Independent Midterm Evaluation of Project *Wiñari*: Combating Child Labor Through Education in the Indigenous Sector in Ecuador

World Learning

Cooperative Agreement Number: E-9-K-5-0052



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APPENDICES

Appendix A: List of Interviewees

Appendix B: Schedule of Evaluation Activities

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AECI	<i>Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional</i> (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation)
CBA	<i>Ciclo Básico Abreviado</i> (Abbreviated Basic Cycle)
CONEPTI	<i>Comité Nacional para la Erradicación Progresiva del Trabajo Infantil</i> (National Committee for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DINEIB	<i>Dirección Nacional de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe</i> (National Board of Intercultural Bilingual Education)
DIPEIB	<i>Dirección Provincial de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe</i> (Provincial Board of Intercultural Bilingual Education)
DyA	<i>Desarrollo y Autogestión</i> (Development and Self-Management)
ECUARUNARI	<i>Confederación de los Pueblos de Nacionalidad Kichwa de Ecuador</i> (Confederation of the Peoples of Kichwa Nationality of Ecuador)
EIB	<i>Educación Intercultural Bilingüe</i> (Intercultural Bilingual Education)
FECOS	<i>Federación de Comunidades y Organizaciones del Cantón Salcedo</i> (Federation of Communities and Organizations of Salcedo Canton)
FLACSO	<i>Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales</i> (Latin-American Faculty of Social Sciences)
FONAKIN	<i>Federación de Organizaciones de la Nacionalidad Kichwa de Napo</i> (Federation of Organizations of the Kichwa Nationality of Napo)
INNFA	<i>Instituto Nacional de la Niñez y la Familia</i> (National Institute for Childhood and the Family)
KNH	<i>Kindernothilfe</i>
MAAE	Minimum Age of Admission to Employment
MICC	<i>Movimiento Indígena y Campesino de Cotopaxi</i> (Cotopaxi Indigenous and Peasant Movement)
MIES	<i>Ministerio de Inclusión Económica y Social</i> (Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion)
MIT	<i>Movimiento Indígena de Tungurahua</i> (Indigenous Movement of Tungurahua)
MOSEIB	National Board of Intercultural Bilingual Education's Model for Intercultural Bilingual Education
MTE	<i>Ministerio de Trabajo y Empleo</i> (Ministry of Labor and Employment)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization

NNA	<i>Niños, niñas y adolescentes</i> (Children and Adolescents)
OCFT	<i>Oficina de Trabajo Infantil, Trabajo Forzado y Trata de Personas</i> (Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking)
OCKIL	<i>Organización de Comunidades Kichwas de Loreto</i> (Organization of the Kichwa Communities of Loreto)
OIM	<i>Organización Internacional para las Migraciones</i> (International Organization for Migration)
OIT	<i>Organización Internacional del Trabajo</i> (International Labour Organization)
PA	<i>Primaria Acelerada</i> (Accelerated Primary Education)
SEIB	<i>Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe</i> (Intercultural Bilingual Education System)
SOY	Save Our Youth
TLC	Free Trade Agreement
UNOCANC	<i>Unión de Organizaciones Campesinas del Norte de Cotopaxi</i> (North Cotopaxi Union of Peasant Organizations)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund (<i>Fondo de las Naciones Unidas para la Infancia</i>)
UPETI	<i>Unidad de Prevención y Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil</i> (Unit for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor)
USDOL	U.S. Department of Labor
UTD	<i>Unidad Territorial Desconcentrada</i> (Decentralized Territorial Unit)
WL	World Learning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project *Wiñari* represents a successful experiment in addressing the problems of child workers in Ecuador's indigenous sectors dropping out of school or becoming too old to attend school. The project has, to date, achieved the majority of its original objectives and goals. Educational initiatives implemented by the project have made significant contributions to improving educational quality in schools where the initiatives were put into practice, and also improved school attendance, reintegration, and the educational advancement of child and adolescent beneficiaries.

Project *Wiñari* has contributed significantly to raising the profile of a subject (child labor in the indigenous sector) that has not been dealt with by institutions responsible for child welfare in Ecuador by pushing for its addition to the agendas of indigenous organizations, state institutions, and civil society organizations. Project implementation has been based on an intrinsically participatory management scheme. This scheme has contributed to the empowerment of local authorities and organizations, resulting in true involvement in project activities by organizations representing the beneficiary population and by important public and civil society institutions (DINEIB [National Board of Intercultural Bilingual Education], INNFA [National Institute for Childhood and the Family], and others). The interinstitutional cooperative network developed by the project represents another of its significant strengths.

Through its various policies, the project has made progress in creating a model that addresses the subject of eradicating child labor in the indigenous population. Although the majority of the project's child beneficiaries continue to carry out some form of labor activity, Project *Wiñari* has had noticeable effects on reducing both the number of hours worked by children and the number of indigenous child beneficiaries (living mainly in rural areas) who work above a threshold of 28 hours per week. However, its effect on child labor of a *dangerous* nature remains limited. The project should have a more precise definition of this concept and should outline a media communication and direct intervention strategy around children, parents and communities that goes beyond what is already happening in the educational field and allows the project to focus its efforts on *eradicating* the most dangerous labor activities carried out by children and adolescents in on the provinces/areas where the majority of such activities take place.

It is recommended that the recording and monitoring of children's and adolescents' labor activities take place on a quarterly basis, so that this information is truly integrated into field work. It is also recommended that the project seek greater involvement of indigenous and community organizations in the monitoring of labor activities within the community.

It is considered equally important, during the second half of its implementation, for the project to strengthen its ties with the Hispanic educational system, seek the latter's acceptance and potential adaptation of curricular initiatives and materials validated within the EIB (Intercultural Bilingual Education) system, and apply project methodology in a significant number of schools within the Hispanic educational system. Likewise, alongside addressing the unresolved task of introducing the subject of child labor into the EIB curriculum, it is recommended that the project intensify actions aimed at increasing the involvement of all DIPEIB (Provincial Board of Intercultural Bilingual Education) field staff in project technical activities and supervision, with a view to facilitating the subsequent transfer of responsibility to them. Finally, it is of the utmost importance

for the project to strengthen current actions aimed at ensuring the financial sustainability of its interventions and the inclusion of *Wiñari* activities in Ecuadorian state strategies related to improving educational quality and coverage and eradicating dangerous child labor.

The *Wiñari* experiment should be published so that other institutions can replicate the project.

I INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has entrusted Macro International Inc. with conducting a midterm independent evaluation of Project *Wiñari* in Ecuador (Cooperative Agreement Number E-9-K-5-0052). Project *Wiñari*'s general objective is to reduce the number of child workers in the indigenous population through actions that allow children to stay in school, allow enrollment or reenrollment of children outside the school system, and eliminate risky or harmful working conditions for children by reducing or eliminating the number of hours worked. The project has been implemented in several locations in the country: in three cantons (Tena, Archidona, and Loreto) of two Amazonian provinces (Napo and Orellana), four cantons (Latacunga, Saquisilí, Salcedo, and Ambato) of two Sierran provinces (Cotopaxi and Tungurahua), and an urban area in Quito city (in Pichincha province). The project's general strategy was to address the main obstacles preventing indigenous children from enrolling in school, continuing with, and completing their basic education. Specifically, the project aimed—

- To help children who are over-age in relation to their educational level to close this gap by means of PA (Accelerated Primary Education) or CBA (Abbreviated Basic Cycle); to promote school enrollment of over-age children who are outside the school system; to reenroll, at an age-appropriate level, children who dropped out of basic education.
- To develop a child labor prevention program that provides a series of services allowing children to remain in the educational system, including extended-timetable tutoring (during the afternoons), educational and pre-vocational orientation, and vacation activity programs.
- To improve teachers' performance and educational methods.
- To provide adolescents with training in skills that would allow them to compete in the labor market after finishing their education through improving high school technical-vocational education.
- To involve various interested parties, in particular indigenous organizations, in the design, monitoring, and evaluation of the project by providing national institutions and indigenous organizations with technical assistance to develop local and national policies for preventing and eradicating child labor.

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II OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The focus of this evaluation included reviewing and assessing all activities developed under the cooperative agreement between USDOL and World Learning (WL). The evaluation considered the project's successes in achieving its goals and objectives as set out in the cooperative agreement and project document. The evaluation considered all the activities that had been implemented during the project's existence, and addresses issues of design, implementation, lessons learned, reliability, and recommendations for future projects.

All USDOL Educational Initiative projects, which are funded through cooperative agreements, are subject to midterm and final evaluations. The Ecuadorian Educational Initiative Project was officially implemented in October 2005, and was due for a midterm evaluation around October 2007. The objectives of the evaluation process were—

1. To help individual organizations identify areas of good performance and those in which implementation of the child labor project could be improved.
2. To help USDOL's Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking (OCFT) learn more about what works and what doesn't in the conceptualization and general design of Educational Initiative Projects, in the broader context of OCFT's technical cooperation program.
3. To evaluate the degree to which objectives, relevant to the specific situation of the country addressed by the project, have been achieved.
4. To evaluate progress in terms of the labor and educational status of children and adolescents (e.g., withdrawal from the worst forms of child labor, enrollment, retention, and completion of educational programs).

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III METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

The midterm evaluation will address several subjects related to the areas of design validity; strategy relevance; various aspects of project implementation; and effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of project actions.

a. Design Validity

The evaluation addressed program design, looking for consistency between the project's methodological proposal and the beneficiaries' needs. Likewise, it analyzed the consistency of the project's logical framework and main document, and the links between its objectives, strategies, activities, results, indicators, and means of verification. The relevance of the project's indicators and means of verification were reviewed, as well as its monitoring systems, tools, and the criteria used to identify and follow up with beneficiaries.

The evaluation also analyzed the project's progress in implementing a community monitoring strategy to follow up children's educational and labor status. Moreover, an assessment was made of the degree to which different interested parties share a common understanding of the concepts of "preventing child labor" and "eradicating child labor."

b. Strategy Relevance

The evaluation conducted a qualitative analysis of the relevance of the project's distinct strategic components in relation to cultural and political variables and to the characteristics of child labor in indigenous communities and in Ecuador's agricultural sector. An evaluation was made of the degree to which changes in educational quality, children's school attendance, vocational training of young people and other services have an effect on reducing child labor, chiefly in the agricultural sector.

c. Project Implementation

The evaluation analyzed the project's strategy-implementation process to date and the way in which it has established itself in an interinstitutional context at local and national levels by creating specific alliances and activities with community and indigenous organizations, NGOs, schools, and other institutional parties. The evaluation highlighted good practices and innovative approaches arising from project implementation. While analyzing the latter, the evaluation addressed other context variables and unforeseen results associated with external variables that may have had a positive or negative effect on the project's implementation and results. Specifically, the evaluation addressed the influence of political and geographical factors, as well as that of regional factors or variables associated with local organizations, on project implementation.

d. Effectiveness

The evaluation reviewed the degree to which project objectives have been achieved and results attained to date. Specifically, it evaluated the effect of project activities on (a) eliminating and preventing child labor; (b) improving educational quality, increasing

enrollment, and improving children's results in school; and (c) raising awareness of the negative consequences of child labor among families, communities, and local and national organizations. The evaluation determined the particular effects of distinct project interventions (Accelerated Primary Education, Abbreviated Basic Cycle, Extended Timetable, improving high school diploma specialties, and others) on the aforementioned aspects. It also addressed the successes and challenges arising from the teacher-training program, and the difficulties encountered and actions undertaken in implementing project interventions in the context of the Intercultural Bilingual and Hispanic education systems.

e. Efficiency

The evaluation reviewed the existing synergy between World Learning and DyA (Development and Self-Management), and the level of participation in, collaboration with, and effectiveness of alliances established with indigenous organizations, state ministries and agencies, local governments and other key institutions in the field, as well as with OIT (International Labour Organization), other NGOs, and other projects sponsored by the U.S. Government. On the subjects of management and budget, the evaluation reviewed the usefulness of technical assistance provided by USDOL to date and analyzed which areas of project management, both technical and financial, could be improved.

f. Sustainability

The evaluation analyzed social sustainability, or to what point local organizations (indigenous, public, and private) have developed a certain degree of ownership of project objectives and strategies, and are committed to developing them. The evaluation also reviewed technical sustainability, or the project's progress in increasing the technical skills of different types of parties in such a way that the latter can carry out actions independently once the project is over. Finally, the evaluation analyzed the way in which the project worked toward ensuring certain financial sustainability for its strategies (e.g., activities carried out by the project executive to raise additional funds, the search for alternative resources for the continuation of project activities, etc.).

The midterm evaluation was participatory in nature. A variety of interested parties and members of other institutions were interviewed as part of the evaluation process, which took place from November 10 through November 22, 2007 (see the list of interviewees in Appendix 1).

During the evaluation process, a combination of different methods was used:

- Review of several of the project's technical documents, curricula, training materials, communication materials and others, as well as data produced by the project's monitoring system.
- Individual and collective interviews and/or focus groups with different interested parties from a broad spectrum of groups and institutions at local and national levels (INNFA [National Institute for Childhood and the Family], DINEIB [National Board of Intercultural Bilingual Education], DIPEIBs [Provincial Boards of Intercultural Bilingual

Education], Ministry of Labor, representatives of indigenous organizations, local government agencies, school principals and teachers, representatives of NGOs [nongovernmental organizations], and others).

- Individual discussions with other donors and agencies addressing the issue of child labor in Ecuador, including the International Labour Organization.
- Observation of interested parties (such as teachers and students), their work in different situations (such as the classroom), and their networking.

The evaluation included an informational meeting about its preliminary results, aimed at interested parties, which took place on November 23, 2007; initial findings were presented, discussed, and enhanced by input from the participants. The evaluation activity schedule can be found in Appendix 2.

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IV FINDINGS

In this section, the evaluation's main findings will be presented regarding project design, results attained, and difficulties encountered in project implementation (in the areas of education, eradicating dangerous child labor, raising awareness among the parties, and media handling), beneficiary participation and interinstitutional cooperation, external determining factors of a political or geographical nature, monitoring system, management and budget, and sustainability.

4.1 PROJECT DESIGN

The project design fully complied with the four objectives of USDOL's Educational Initiatives, which were raising awareness of the importance of education, strengthening the formal education system and temporary educational arrangements, strengthening national institutions and policies regarding child labor, and ensuring project sustainability.

Project design was realistic, and problems and solutions set out were relevant to the local situation, where school dropout, over-age children, the negative effect of child labor on school attendance, and educational quality in Ecuador's rural indigenous population were factors requiring high-priority attention.

The project's definition of "dangerous labor" was extremely broad and mixed together separate categories not necessarily considered as "labor" in projects of this type. This broad definition hampered the project's ability to focus its monitoring and eradication efforts on the riskiest cases of child labor and act on them in a focused and timely way. Moreover, although the project consulted with indigenous organizations, parents, children, and adolescents with the aim of drawing up a list of "dangerous activities" adapted to local cultural understandings on the topic, the outcome of the consultation used multiple, nonhierarchical, and potentially contradictory criteria. In its definition of "child labor," the project has included domestic tasks carried out by children in their own homes that, strictly speaking, were not usually considered "labor" by the majority of countries in their national statistical systems, nor by other USDOL projects. Reducing the corresponding percentage of children who were only carrying out this type of activity at the time of the baseline survey (e.g., 771 of the project's second cohort of 2,702 subjects) would result in the rate of child labor in the baseline study dropping by 28.53 percent; therefore, by not separating out the onset of labor activities (excluding domestic labor), the number of children withdrawn from child labor would go up proportionately. In practical terms, toward the end of the 2006–2007 school year, it was noted that 611 of the 2,702 children and adolescents were only carrying out domestic activities, which represents a variation of 28.53 percent to 22.6 percent in this area, or in other words, over the course of two years, around 20 percent of children and adolescents were only carrying out domestic tasks, rather than true labor activities.¹

¹ This observation is in no way intended to minimize the negative impact on children in Ecuador's rural areas of carrying out domestic tasks over excessive periods of time. Frequently, due to the extreme poverty in which many rural families live and the scarcity of sources of income available to them, parents often migrate seasonally and children remain alone in the house for prolonged periods or end up replacing adults in carrying out domestic tasks, which affects their development and hinders school attendance.

Using a stricter definition of the concept of “dangerous child labor” would allow the project to better focus its efforts on eradicating harmful activities in the smaller group of indigenous child workers involved in highly dangerous practices. For example, the project database showed that while 22.6 percent of its beneficiaries were only carrying out domestic activities (tasks that largely don’t entail dangerous labor activities) and 17.4 percent were not working, 60 percent were carrying out activities in varied situations (farm work, potentially in addition to domestic tasks) where the most dangerous activities occurred most often.

In general, it may be said that although the project has an effective strategy for reducing children’s hours of work, its design lacked a *specific* strategy for eradicating the most dangerous forms of child labor, such as those entailing the use of sharp objects, explosives, toxic substances, firearms, etc.

On the understanding that in rural areas it is infeasible to completely prevent children from devoting some hours of the day to supporting their families, the project has established a threshold of 28 hours per week (four hours per day) as its concept for eradicating labor activity, regardless of a child’s age. Although realistic from a practical perspective and offering immediate results, this approach fell outside the stipulations of International Labour Organization Convention No. 138 (minimum age of admission to employment [MAAE]) concerning children under the age of 15 years. Fifteen years is the MAAE according to Ecuadorian law, although limited participation by children of this age was accepted in “formative” tasks. Therefore, while it was necessary to keep the threshold of 28 hours of activity for practical and realistic purposes, it would be necessary, in order to conform with national and international law on this matter, for the project to make additional efforts to ensure that children younger than 15 years of age, particularly those younger than 12 years of age, were involved as little as possible in true labor activities outside the home.

4.2 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Project *Wiñari* has contributed significantly to raising the profile of child labor in the indigenous sector, which is a subject that has not been dealt with by institutions responsible for child welfare in Ecuador. In line with this, by means of its distinct policies, the project has created an effective model, working with the indigenous population to eradicate child labor in the Andean world.

The project’s general strategy has been fairly successful in achieving its specific objectives, namely, creating educational opportunities appropriate to the needs of child workers—including the subject of child labor on the agendas of indigenous institutions and organizations—and raising awareness of the negative effects of child labor on education.

This strategy was founded on the following 10 elements:

- a. Selecting communities/schools in which to develop the project on the basis of criteria appropriate to program goals: child labor, over-age children and school dropout, poverty, etc.

- b. Implementing all project educational initiatives within the context of the formal school system, not alongside it, thereby promoting its subsequent sustainability.
- c. Using an essentially participatory methodology for project implementation, based on a central role and ownership of the initiatives by indigenous organizations, beginning by developing the baseline study with them. Project Management Committees, in which indigenous organizations participate, directly supervise the running of the project in each area, approving local expenses, and deciding on the selection and hiring of schoolteachers and local technicians.² Recruitment of teaching staff is done locally, which ensures project sustainability.³
- d. Focusing attention on the problems of school dropout and over-age children and concentrating efforts on school reenrollment and accelerated learning programs.
- e. Developing curricular initiatives and materials for Accelerated Primary Education and Abbreviated Basic Cycle concordant with the nature and intercultural content of EIB (Intercultural Bilingual Education) as well as with DINEIB's MOSEIB (National Board of Intercultural Bilingual Education's Model for Intercultural Bilingual Education) and INNFA's "Avanzar" ("Move Forward") initiatives; validation of these curricula and materials by DINEIB specialists has contributed to this aim.
- f. Using daily and extended school attendance as a means of reducing the labor hours of children and adolescents.
- g. Establishing mechanisms for educational and remedial assessment prior to reintegrating children in schools.
- h. Strengthening educational quality and school services, either through teacher training, providing work materials, equipping classrooms, providing food, or improving technical specialties in high schools.

² Ecuador's indigenous movement has a long history of struggle and attempts to declare its importance and identity. The following factors, which could be useful/necessary to aid reproduction of the model in other contexts, encouraged indigenous organization involvement with Project *Wiñari*: a. The subject of Intercultural Bilingual Education initially allowed indigenous organizations to express their demands in the 1990s; they were granted certain decisionmaking powers in this sphere by the Ecuadorian State. Intercultural Bilingual Education is seen as a means of integrating indigenous peoples into Ecuadorian society, but also of distinguishing their specific characteristics. In reality, aside from Project *Wiñari*, the *political space* available for implementing educational initiatives is "reserved" for indigenous organizations. These organizations already have active secretaries of education, as education has been a significant item on their agendas for many years; b. DyA already had a long history of working with indigenous organizations on other topics and projects in the areas in which Project *Wiñari* operates; this generated confidence among indigenous organizations and encouraged their involvement in the project; c. Involving indigenous organizations from the outset of project design was very important in encouraging its subsequent ownership by these organizations; d. Appointing members of indigenous organizations (people with an acknowledged track record in the community and the educational field) as project staff coordinators in each area (Sierra, Selva) was important. The fact that the majority of project staff came from the same community/area was also very important.

³ The project has its headquarters in the different provinces in premises belonging to indigenous organizations. The latter have supported the project by offering use of their infrastructure in some communities.

- i. Establishing alliances with state and civil society institutions responsible for child welfare, education, and labor, in the quest for subsequent program sustainability.
- j. Raising awareness among families, communities, and indigenous organizations of the importance of education and the harmful nature of child labor.

By November 2007 the project was successfully heading toward attaining its objectives, though with variable results depending on the objective. In the next section, an analysis is made of the main outcomes of Project Wiñari's implementation with respect to education, eradicating dangerous child labor, raising awareness among interested parties, and media handling.

4.2.1 Results Related to Education

General Outcomes

According to the project database, the cumulative coverage of the project in November 2007 (i.e., at the start of the third year of project implementation/2007–2008 school year)⁴ amounted to 5,657 people, between Accelerated Primary Education, Abbreviated Basic Cycle, Extended Timetable, and improvement in high school diploma specialties.

Table 1: Wiñari Project Beneficiaries, November 2007

Program	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Accelerated Primary Education	293	240	533
Abbreviated Basic Cycle	365	268	633
Extended Timetable	2,610	1,631	4,241
Specialty	n/a	250	250
Total	3,268	2,389	5,657

n/a = no data available

Source: Project Wiñari's Monitoring and Evaluation System database

Project Wiñari has created a set of educational initiatives appropriate to the needs of indigenous child workers aimed at achieving rapid educational reintegration and updating (Accelerated Primary Education, Abbreviated Basic Cycle). Wiñari's pedagogical model offers fairly sound results. After the first year of full implementation of the project's educational initiatives, of the 2,702 beneficiaries retained,⁵ 270 children and adolescents had benefited from Accelerated Primary Education, 328 from Abbreviated Basic Cycle, and 53 from Regular Basic Cycle. Moreover, 2,051 beneficiaries had received educational enhancement through Extended Timetable. It is also noted that 376 children and adolescents not attending school at the time of the baseline survey were enrolled the following year.

⁴ I.e., at the beginning of the second year of implementing educational initiatives (the project's first year was spent constructing the institutional and community setup to prepare for their implementation).

⁵ Adjusted figures supplied by the project's monitoring unit.

Likewise, the project has significantly improved educational delivery and quality in the schools and high schools where it has been active. In concrete terms, this project has—

- Introduced new curricular initiatives (Accelerated Primary Education, Abbreviated Basic Cycle, Extended Timetable) and their respective materials into Intercultural Bilingual Education.
- Improved curricula, infrastructure, and specialties at Colegio Ávila High School.
- Developed teacher-training and technical assistance programs.
- Increased the number of available teachers in schools.
- Expanded school timetables.
- Improved school infrastructure and educational equipment.
- Made free educational material available to beneficiaries.
- Improved and increasing food supplements.

In addition, the project has been supporting SEIB (Intercultural Bilingual Education System) in restructuring the general high school diploma and defining SEIB standards and indicators. *However, the task of introducing the subject of child labor into EIB's curriculum remains outstanding.*

Bearing in mind that the project's four-year goal in terms of total number of beneficiaries was 6,178 direct beneficiaries (2,124 withdrawals to which 146 were added through an additional project eradicating trafficking in Tungurahua), by October 2007, before the beginning of the 2007–2008 school year, the project had already benefited 3,291 children and adolescents through its different initiatives; of these, 2,702 were retained and 487 had completed their respective cycle. Of all the beneficiaries, 1,950 were under 12 years of age.

Enrollment has increased substantially in schools supported by the project. In 2007, the project's retention level was 82.1 percent and its completion of studies level was 14.8 percent. The school dropout rate was 3.1 percent (102 children and adolescents). Keeping children and adolescents in school has been an arduous task; success is more limited in the case of adolescents working outside the home or families that move from city to city.

In general, it may be stated that toward its midpoint (two years), Project *Wiñari* has provided the set of originally envisaged educational services to a significant proportion of the originally predicted beneficiaries. No major difficulties are anticipated in achieving the project's final goals, which would allow the majority of beneficiaries to receive at least two continuous years of benefits. The only exception with regard to implementing project goals in Arajuno can be explained by the intrinsic limitations of curricular organization in that area (see further on).

However, despite its undeniable successes, it is noted that the project has been implemented in a very limited way, and only relatively recently, in Hispanic system schools; as a result, it isn't possible to draw conclusions about the characteristics of its implementation in this system. Given that a significant number of indigenous children are studying or hoping to study in Hispanic system schools, the project still has a vacuum to fill in this regard. In this context, it would be advisable for the project to strengthen (which, in reality, is one of its goals) its ties with the Hispanic education system, seek the latter's acceptance of its curricular initiatives and materials validated by the EIB, and apply its methodology to a selection of Hispanic system schools (potentially those in urban areas) that have a large number of indigenous students and/or are located in areas with a large indigenous population.

Relevance of Implemented Educational Alternatives

Notwithstanding the aforementioned caveat, the project's methodological contributions to the development of alternative curricula addressing the problem of over-age and school dropout are highly significant. This significance includes both curricular design and the development of quality educational materials to supplement children's and adolescents' learning.

Thus, for example, *Accelerated Primary Education* allows students to make up six years of primary education in three annual cycles and is an alternative that, along with *Abbreviated Basic Cycle*, is helping to solve, in a meaningful way, the problem of over-age. Abbreviated Basic Cycle allows students to make up three school years in just one year, and is an alternative valued greatly by families, children, and adolescents. The existence of both initiatives has allowed a significant number of children outside the school system to reenroll and have the opportunity to complete their interrupted studies. The use of entrance exams (allowing an evaluation of children's and adolescents' initial abilities) and a preliminary remedial program as the first phase of reintegration into school/high school, are very appropriate elements in this program; as are the curricula and materials used, which were validated by DINEIB. In general, it can be said that both Accelerated Primary Education and Abbreviated Basic Cycle are initiatives that have an unmistakable effect on reducing the number of hours worked by children and adolescents.

The additional educational initiative, "Extended Timetable," fosters a balance between developing orientation activities around educational tasks and conducting playful and various skill-developing activities (including reading and writing), and represents a significant supplement that contributes to improving the formal education received by children during the morning timetable. After one year of implementing Extended Timetable in several schools, an analysis of the number of hours worked before and after its implementation showed that, although children and adolescents spent more time studying, this method was not making a significant impact on reducing the number of hours worked by *children under age 12 years* (who represent the majority of those covered by the Project Wiñari), *given that they were already working only a moderate number of hours*. However, modest results can be seen regarding the number of hours worked by children between the ages of 13 and 14 years, with a drastic reduction in hours worked by children between 15 and 17 years.

On the other hand, *improving high school specialties* has, to date, evolved unevenly. Noteworthy progress has been made, with very significant successes in redesigning and implementing the

curriculum and installing several specialty laboratories (around eight) in Ávila de la Amazonía High School, but barely any in Colegio Chaquiñán High School. The need to first redesign the curriculum and establish a competency profile in the latter school, along with its internal organizational problems (e.g., the absence of internal procedures), have hampered the implementation of actions envisaged by the project. Moreover, it will take a while for the school to change from its current part-time campus status to a full-time classroom model. In Ávila High School's case, its noted inclination toward self-management and sustainability was particularly significant and satisfactory.

Although not part of its initial objectives, a significant challenge for the project was ensuring that successes achieved by students through Accelerated Primary Education and Abbreviated Basic Cycle were maintained by encouraging their subsequent enrollment for the high school diploma, which would have an additional effect on reinforcing the eradication of excessive and/or dangerous labor. On this matter, the project has obtained grants to support students who complete Abbreviated Basic Cycle, so they may go on to study for their high school diploma.

Main Obstacles to Implementing Educational Alternatives

Module design and validation, by virtue of being a shared responsibility with DINEIB and because of several staff changes in the latter institution, was a process that went on for longer than anticipated and caused a postponement of the start date for implementing curricular content. Likewise, at the outset, there was a certain resistance on the part of school principals and teachers in some schools and high schools, which resulted in coordination problems with project staff. The fact that project staff persons were not members of DINEIB fostered a critical attitude regarding the running of some schools, which, in the long run, promoted improvements in their operation. However, in some cases, some of these differences caused significant friction (e.g., compliance with attendance and teachers' schedules). This problem was finally overcome.

In general, there were multiple obstacles to official acceptance of Project *Wiñari* programs in the separate provinces, mainly regarding authorities endorsing children and adolescent studies and including limitations imposed by certain civil servants over the transfer of students from the SEIB (Intercultural Bilingual Education System) into the Hispanic education system. These obstacles made it necessary to authorize the project's educational initiatives and clarify its graduation and evaluation systems. As an additional, significant project accomplishment, since October 2007, there has been a Ministerial Accord that rectifies this problem and promotes endorsement of students' results in Accelerated Primary Education and Abbreviated Basic Cycle by DIPEIBs.

Normal delays in annual enrollment have occurred in the various provinces due to economic hardship and other cultural reasons. However, it was noted in the 2007 process that a greater number of children and adolescents enrolled in a timely way, which would have been encouraged by vocational educational activities. In several of the project's implementation areas, initial obstacles were presented by parents and some regular schoolteachers who did not understand the pedagogical perspective and benefits of Extended Timetable (e.g., "the children waste time and play instead of studying"). The project has had to introduce guidelines to prevent this space from being withdrawn.

The problem of early teen pregnancy and its negative effects on adolescents' education and development in general (interrupting the educational process and bringing on the start or intensification of labor activity) is a problem that the project did not address in a preventive way. However, in some cases, in order to resolve situations that had a direct impact on children and adolescents, the project had to address other social problems such as domestic violence, parental abandonment, juvenile alcoholism, support in the event of accidents, and others.

Teacher Selection and Training

The project's initial proposal to improve the teaching of Spanish as a second language in SEIB schools using Andean University methodology was not implemented. Project executives gave the reason as insufficient resources and a limited number of teachers that implementing this proposal would have entailed; the costs, seemingly, were badly estimated in the first instance. The majority of this policy was transferred to training teachers in the project's educational alternatives. In place of the aforementioned policy, the project offered support to SEIB in restructuring the general high school diploma (*bachillerato*) and defining SEIB standards and indicators.

In addition, the project has directly focused its interventions regarding the quality of EIB on the schools in which it was active. In this context, the training of teachers and tutors paid for by the project has been carried out by project staff as well as trainers hired from a specialized university and institute, and comprised an average of eight training sessions per year in the different provinces in which the project operated.

Training content included subjects related to educational planning, the perspective and guidelines of Basic Flexible Education, systematization and evaluation of the preparatory study cycle, use of educational resources, activities promoting skills development, and other subjects of interest. In some cases, regular school staff have also participated in these training sessions.

At the same time, pedagogical advice for teachers and tutors was offered on a regular basis by project staff (e.g., local technicians and pedagogical consultants). The teachers appeared satisfied and valued the support received from the project.

Selection of teachers and tutors hired by the project has been carried out by a committee made up of indigenous organization members, the DIPEIB, and a project representative, through a process of grading on merit. This method has brought transparency to the process and, at the same time, allowed staff to be chosen from local communities/areas, thereby ensuring the project's future technical sustainability. However, working with the teachers has not been easy. In some cases, teachers have left the project after being trained, either because they found the work situation very difficult or found other employment. In addition, it was difficult to find qualified indigenous teachers (one of the project's operating conditions) in the Loreto and Sierra areas.

4.2.2 Results Related to Eradicating Dangerous Child Labor

Project *Wiñari* has brought the subject of eradicating child labor onto the agendas of indigenous institutions and organizations and EIB authorities, as well as into schools; all these institutions have played a central role in project implementation. Moreover, the project has succeeded in

bringing the subject of child labor in indigenous children and adolescents and dangerous child labor onto the agenda of state and civil society institutions, such as INNFA.

The project's strategy of addressing the subject of dangerous child labor has been a sequential process. Thus, project entry into communities has been linked with highlighting the importance of education, then addressing the number of hours worked by children on domestic tasks and child labor in the agricultural sector, and finally (and most recently), focusing attention on the subject of dangerous child labor.

Notwithstanding the above, as the following tables show, it is noted that, as a "natural" consequence of beneficiaries' increasing age, the number of students beginning labor activities, regardless of the activity's risk, increases by little more than 7 percent after one year of implementation of the project's educational initiatives (a percentage derived from comparing the number of subjects not working at the baseline survey [673 subjects or 24.90 percent] with those not working at the end of the project's second year of implementation [469 subjects or 17.35 percent]).⁶ The most important percentage reductions in the number of children not working are noted in the provinces of Napo and Tungurahua.

Table 2: Labor Status, By Age, At Baseline Survey

Labor status/number of hours worked	Age			
	Under 12 years	13–14 years	15–17 years	Total
Not working	340	31	98	469
Working less than 28 hours	1,487	204	349	2,040
29–36 hours	80	14	24	118
37 hours or more	43	14	18	75
Total	1,950	263	489	2,702

Source: Project *Wiñari*'s Monitoring and Evaluation System database

**Table 3: Labor Status by Initial Age (Baseline Survey)
At 1-Year Monitoring Point**

Labor status/number of hours worked	Age			
	Under 12 years	13–14 years	15–17 years	Total
Not working	380	20	273	673
Working less than 28 hours	1420	104	67	1,591
29–36 hours	51	25	26	102
37 hours or more	99	114	123	336
Total	1,950	263	489	2,702

Source: Project *Wiñari*'s Monitoring and Evaluation System database

⁶ Analyzing this type of data is important, as it allows a distinction to be made between the real effects of the project and the "normal" development of children and adolescents living in rural areas (e.g., increase in early involvement in labor activities), once puberty and adolescence begin.

However, with respect to its primary objective of reducing dangerous child labor, which is understood in this context to mean harmful labor conditions, *Project Wiñari has succeeded in partially reducing (by 66 percent) the number of children and adolescents working more than 28 hours per week (from 438 to 193). Likewise, 1,154 children and adolescents have been withdrawn from dangerous labor, equivalent to just more than 54 percent of the project's original final goal regarding eradication.*

Despite the above, while a remarkable degree of awareness raising has occurred in the community regarding the negative effects of child labor on education, there is still a significant number of child and adolescent project beneficiaries working excessive hours (above 28 hours per week), or involved in dangerous labor activities. While the project makes increasing progress in reducing the former, certain high-risk labor practices are still carried out by children and adolescents, such as hunting with shotguns, fishing with dynamite, fumigating, using machetes, etc. A number of adults involved and the children themselves are unaware of the full dangers of these activities; therefore, it is necessary to focus efforts on these activities and work more directly with parents, on whom the children's labor activities largely depend.

4.2.3 Results Related to Raising Awareness among the Various Parties and Media Handling

The project has carried out several awareness-raising actions regarding the negative consequences of dangerous child labor, through workshops and other activities, with teachers, leaders of indigenous organizations, and parents. The degree of awareness reached regarding the need to eradicate dangerous child labor is variable, being greatest among educational staff and leaders of indigenous organizations.

With the support of *Foro por los NNA* (Forum for Children and Adolescents), the project conducted an awareness-raising program for children and parents and succeeded in systematizing their perception of the most dangerous forms of child labor and those that could be carried out by age.

While success has been achieved regarding parental understanding of the negative effects of child labor on education and the need for children to not work excessive hours, there was a limited awareness among parents and a significant number of children, of the need to *eradicate dangerous child labor*. Parents' and children's knowledge of Ecuadorian Law on child labor and their identification of the most dangerous forms of child labor were also outstanding objectives that needed to be intensively addressed in the second half of the project.

Due to difficulties with CORAPE (Coordinator of Popular and Educational Radios of Ecuador), the project's initial strategy for raising awareness among the population of the harmful nature of dangerous child labor by radio campaign was not feasible. However, some radio broadcasts have been carried out and the message has been spread by Loreto community radio. The project needs to rethink its communication strategy, presenting alternatives with a view to implementing this aspect in the various provinces conscientiously and more professionally, focusing its message in each case on the specific forms of dangerous labor that are most common in each province.

4.3 PARTICIPATION BY BENEFICIARIES AND INTER-INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

Project design, implementation, and follow-up have been of an essentially decentralized and participatory nature, involving indigenous organizations in a central role and coordinating with educational supervisory authorities (DIPEIBs), schools, and child welfare organizations.

The project has developed a vast synergistic network with state institutions (DINEIB and DIPEIBs, UPETI del MTE [Ministry of Labor and Employment Unit for the Prevention and Eradication of Child Labor], MIES [Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion]), schools, indigenous organizations (MICC [Cotopaxi Indigenous and Peasant Movement], MIT [Indigenous Movement of Tungurahua], UNOCANC [North Cotopaxi Union of Peasant Organizations], FECOS [Federation of Communities and Organizations of Salcedo Canton], FONAKIN [Federation of Organizations of the Kichwa Nationality of Napo], OCKIL [Organization of the Kichwa Communities of Loreto], etc.), international organizations (OIT, United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF]), civil society organizations (INNFA, Foro de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes [Forum for Children and Adolescents]), and businesses (Diners Club, Movistar—Telefónica S.A., etc.). This network has encouraged exchanges among members, for example, while the project has used informative material produced by OIT and others for its activities, and INNFA has awarded grants to some students, the project offered technical assistance to INNFA so that it could expand into new areas with INNFA funding, particularly areas where trafficking of children for labor purposes has been discovered.

Relations with the Ministry of Labor have developed through UPETI, from which DyA has received information and through which DyA fosters coordination. Likewise, information has been contributed to CONEPTI (National Committee for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor), even though this institution has not created specific proposals regarding child labor in indigenous communities. Relations with the Education Ministry (see previous section) and INNFA (see next paragraph) have been smooth; in large part, the project is founded on close coordination of its actions with the DIPEIB in each province.

In August 2007, DyA and the UTD de Tungurahua del INNFA (Decentralized Territorial Unit of Tungurahua of the National Institute for Childhood and the Family) signed an agreement to implement a project, funded by INNFA, eradicating indigenous children's involvement in begging in Tungurahua and Cotopaxi, primarily in three parishes of the town of Quisapincha. Project *Wiñari* offered technical assistance in transferring methodologies to prevent trafficking of children in these communities by strengthening the education system through educational initiatives similar to Project *Wiñari*. In addition, attitudinal change will be encouraged in the intervention area, along with the development of an intervention protocol for child victims of labor exploitation. This action is in keeping with the general framework of the MIES project: "Eradicating Begging in the Andean Corridor."

In general, relations with local authorities have been smooth: in September 2007, agreements and commitments were signed by the mayors of Riobamba, Otavalo, Ibarra, Quito, Baños, and Ambato against child labor and the trafficking of children for labor purposes. Action taken by the Municipalities on child labor in the project's intervention areas was variable. The majority of

authorities are now aware of the subject and some municipalities, such as Loreto, are providing specific support to schools and high schools with which the project is working.

Project *Wiñari* has maintained a collaborative relationship with CRS Project SOY (Catholic Relief Services Project: Save Our Youth), supporting SOY by exchanging information and materials, and explaining the way in which DyA produced and validated its materials. DyA has been one of IPEC-OIT's (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour–International Labour Organization) counterparts in implementing the Time-bound Program on Child Labor in Ecuador (i.e., banana industry, cut-flower industry, commercial sexual exploitation). Collaborative relations between both institutions have been close and smooth. DyA has implemented educational initiatives similar to those of Project *Wiñari* as part of its project with OIT. The Foro Florícola (Flower Industry Forum) is adapting Project *Wiñari*'s methodology to its own activities in the area of Cayambe, located in Pichincha province. Given that DyA is one of the implementers of OTECEL S.A. (Telefónica)'s PRONIÑO (PROCHILD) Program on Child Labor, part of the methodology used by DyA in Project *Wiñari* could be useful in applying a methodology to improve educational quality that PRONIÑO plans to implement within its own activities.

Relations with U.S. Government cooperative agencies at a local level have been limited to the exchange of information. The U.S. State Department supports action against the trafficking of persons in Ecuador, including trafficking for labor purposes, through its financial backing of OIM (International Organization for Migration) activities in the country. OIM is interested in coordinating actions with DyA in the area of trafficking children and adolescents for labor purposes, an area in which DyA and INNFA are making inroads.

Finally, with financial backing from AECI (Spanish Agency for International Cooperation), and together with FLACSO (Latin-American Faculty of Social Sciences) and OIT, DyA is participating in a project to establish a research agenda on the subject of child labor and indigenous peoples.

4.4 THE EFFECT OF EXTERNAL DETERMINING FACTORS ON THE PROJECT

4.4.1 Political Factors

Overall political factors such as political instability, regime change, issues linked to the TLC (Free Trade Agreement) or United States/Ecuador relations, have had a marginal impact on the project's development. However, political instability has had a certain impact in terms of the frequent changes in Educational Authorities in 2005–2006, which caused certain delays in obtaining the agreements necessary for project implementation.

The existence of an institutional framework uniting indigenous movements and a distinct educational scheme, Intercultural Bilingual Education (EIB), provided an intervention opportunity and acted as a catalyst for Project *Wiñari*'s initiatives.

On the other hand, the relatively recent change in national administration and the inclusion of eradicating child labor and promoting education as priorities on the Social Agenda for Childhood and Adolescence promoted by the Correa Administration has aroused the interest of several institutions (INNFA, DINEIB) in Project *Wiñari*'s objectives and methodology.

The major challenge in coordinating with public institutions has been the government's positioning of child labor and education as priorities within state social policy. Recent political changes in Ecuador have led to both subjects, along with trafficking minors for labor purposes, arousing interest among national and provincial authorities. The current situation offers an increasing number of opportunities for project strategies to be introduced as part of the alternatives for addressing child labor and education under consideration by the Social Agenda for Childhood and Adolescence. There is a sympathetic attitude toward the project in terms of evaluating this possibility coming from INNFA and the Ministry of Education.

Relations with the Board for Hispanic Education are still at a very early stage and need to be addressed and strengthened.

4.4.2 Geographical Factors and Regional Differences Related to the Distribution of Dangerous Labor and Age Ranges of the Beneficiary Population

Although the distance (at times several dozen kilometers) between different communities and between schools and children's homes has been an obstacle to achieving the project's daily tasks (in some cases requiring an entire day to carry out barely one or two visits), the efforts of the local technical teams and the cooperation of teachers, communities and parents has meant that technical assistance, supervision, educational activities, and home visits can be conducted regularly and properly. Implementation of the project in various regions has been relatively uniform. In general, the structuring of management units has followed a "natural" distribution arising from the existence of various indigenous organizations in each region/canton.

Despite the fact that, in the majority of cantons, the project has been introduced effectively and has successfully developed its activities, it could not be finally implemented in Arajuno as had been initially planned because this area lacked a suitable curriculum and an ability-based graduate job profile with which to sustain the proposal.

There are no marked differences in project implementation in the various regions. However, there were certain differences in the distribution of beneficiaries by age and labor-related risks in the separate provinces.

Thus, for example, as the following table shows, *there is a higher frequency of dangerous labor activities in the Napo province compared to the other provinces.*

**Table 4: Prevalence of Dangerous Activities by Province/
Over Total of Children and Adolescents**

Dangerous Activity	Province					
	Cotopaxi	Napo	Orellana	Pichincha	Tungurahua	Total
Handling chemicals or fumigation	10.8%	65.1%	0.0%	1.2%	22.9%	100.0%
Handling or using fuel	24.4%	40.0%	2.2%	4.4%	28.9%	100.0%
Using sharp tools	7.2%	79.0%	2.8%	1.6%	9.3%	100.0%
Employing significant physical exertion or heavy weights	9.5%	54.4%	13.3%	5.4%	17.4%	100.0%
Using dangerous machinery (chain saw, guillotine)	0.0%	78.9%	5.3%	5.3%	10.5%	100.0%
Using firearms (shotgun, dynamite)	2.6%	53.8%	38.5%	0.0%	5.1%	100.0%
Working at night	16.1%	77.4%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	100.0%
Total	8.8%	72.4%	5.2%	2.6%	11.0%	100.0%

Source: Project *Wiñari's* Monitoring and Evaluation System database

Given that very dangerous jobs occur in a limited number of cases (distributed geographically by type of job), actions focused by province and community should be encouraged.

In general, there were no significant gender differences in the prevalence of risky activities.

The following table shows a greater percentage of beneficiaries between 15 and 17 years old in the provinces of Orellana and Tungurahua (around 40 percent each) compared with the other provinces.

Table 5: Ages of Project *Wiñari's* First Cohort of Beneficiaries (2006–2007 School Year)

Age	Province					
	Cotopaxi	Napo	Orellana	Pichincha	Tungurahua	Total
Under 12 years of age	79.6%	78.2%	49.3%	81.3%	34.5%	72.2%
13–14 years	11.2%	6.8%	8.9%	8.9%	25.4%	9.7%
15–17 years	9.2%	15.0%	41.9%	9.8%	40.1%	18.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Project *Wiñari's* Monitoring and Evaluation System database

Regarding 2,702 subjects, no significant differences were seen between the provinces in terms of retention and completion rates, except in Tungurahua province, whose completion rate is higher (more than double the others) at 36.7 percent, which could be explained by there being a higher proportion of older beneficiaries in that province.

**Table 6: Summary of Enrollment, Retention, and Completion
Results by Province (2006–2007 School Year)**

Province	Enrolled	Retained	Completed	Dropped out
Cotopaxi	100.0%	82.5%	14.3%	3.2%
Napo	100.0%	86.9%	9.1%	4.1%
Orellana	100.0%	79.0%	19.3%	1.7%
Pichincha	100.0%	87.0%	13.0%	0.0%
Tungurahua	100.0%	59.2%	36.7%	4.2%
Total	100.0%	82.1%	14.8%	3.1%

Source: Project *Wiñari*'s Monitoring and Evaluation System database

4.5 THE MONITORING SYSTEM

The project's monitoring system has been collecting detailed information and reporting to USDOL on the status and academic situation of withdrawn and prevented beneficiaries. The project's sources of information regarding children's and adolescents' labor status were the children and adolescents themselves, who were interviewed by their teachers every semester. A school attendance register was taken daily and reasons for nonattendance of more than three consecutive days were verified through home visits by project staff. The project did not appear to have significant problems obtaining the necessary information from schools and educational authorities.

Despite its advantages, the fact that monitoring child labor took place primarily in the school setting meant that, if a child completed Accelerated Primary Education or Abbreviated Basic Cycle and did not stay on at school, he/she was possibly lost to followup with no possibility of monitoring his/her status a couple of years later. Collecting of children's labor status information from their own communities remains limited. Implementation of a community monitoring system of educational and labor status is still outstanding.

The project has succeeded in establishing clear criteria for all its principal stakeholders regarding the definition of "withdrawn" (no more than 28 hours child labor per week, no dangerous child labor, greater than 75 percent school attendance) and "prevention" (benefits for nonworking children and adolescents that help prevent them getting involved in labor). The definition of "withdrawn" used by the project is satisfactory; however, its definition/list of "dangerous activities" needs improving/refining, as it includes extra-occupational and other low-risk activities together with extremely high-risk activities, all at the same level.

In general, the performance monitoring plan and indicators used for project monitoring were appropriate, useful, and relevant for both monitoring and evaluating the project, particularly in relation to changes seen in educational level (children's and adolescents' participation in the project's various services/educational initiatives; and enrollment, retention, and completion of the school year); the opinions of different parties involved on a social level (parents, teachers, and others appreciating the importance of education over child labor and their knowledge regarding national legislation on child labor, its harmful effects on education, and dangerous forms of child labor); and the inclusion of the project's educational alternatives and the subject of child labor in the policies and agendas of several public institutions and indigenous organizations. However,

there is no record of parental *attitude (their positive opinion regarding eradication)*, nor that of other adult parties and children, regarding the particularly harmful nature of certain forms of child labor that should be eradicated *immediately and treated as a priority*.

The frequency of measuring/monitoring of the variable “child labor” was unsatisfactory: children’s risky labor activities were only recorded every six months, which did not afford an opportunity for timely feedback leading to the development of *early and focused* actions on the most dangerous, even life-threatening, forms of child labor. Thus, although the project’s progress was reported to its sponsor in an opportune way, the monitoring system was not providing timely feedback to local or school teams, which would have allowed a more detailed, comparative followup of results from the various intervention sites, focusing actions on children involved in the most dangerous forms of child labor. Moreover, there was no secondary data processing going on, which would have allowed a distinction to be drawn between the form and intensity of child labor and dangerous child labor in the various provinces and separated out their distribution by age, sex, and other factors. In this regard, the project has a significant database that should be better used to specifically highlight age, sex, and dangerous labor activity in each intervention area.

Recording of enrollment, retention, and completion of the school year by students in schools who are not direct beneficiaries of the project (e.g., “indirect beneficiaries”) would be more useful if these results were directly compared to results from the project’s “direct beneficiaries”; *this would establish the degree of project effectiveness on each school’s overall performance* (e.g., Is the school dropout rate lower among project beneficiaries than among the total number of school students?).

Finally, because of USDOL stipulations, the category “prevented child” is considered an “anticipatory” definition, and therefore weak. A child should only be considered as having been “prevented” toward the final year of the project, as only at that time does the concept of “prevention” acquire true and definitive meaning.

4.6 MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Relations between World Learning and DyA have been effective in achieving project objectives, generally speaking, without conflict arising that could hamper project progress. DyA has woven together a wide range of institutional alliances that have helped the project move toward meeting its objectives.

However, it is noted that, from a practical perspective, there was no clear separation of functions between World Learning and DyA staff: technical decisionmaking and approval of expenses at the local level were carried out by World Learning representative in Ecuador, and both institutions shared an accounting management system inappropriate to the conditions of a subcontract.

However, there were several positive aspects to the project’s general management, which represented good management practices, such as—

- Prioritizing project intervention areas based on specific criteria.

- Establishing accords, agreements and detailed agreements with several state institutions and indigenous organizations.
- Encouraging the participatory nature of project management, budget implementation, and staff selection, through establishing Management Committees with participation by indigenous organizations, DIPEIBs, and DyA staff.
- Linking monthly local technical planning with the available budget.
- Centralizing bulk buying.
- Ensuring transparency of accountability.

The existence of Management Committees (made up of representatives from indigenous organizations, DyA, DIPEIBs, INNFA, and other institutions) in provinces/cantons where the project is active, as well as the selection, by these committees, of project staff and the majority of teachers and tutors from the local community, has contributed to significant ownership by the community and its organizations, affording them a leading role in project development.

USDOL's support in providing information and feedback on project progress, as well as its relations with World Learning appear satisfactory. USDOL staff has visited the project on two occasions.

4.7 SUSTAINABILITY

The project's initial strategy for achieving sustainability appears satisfactory.

The project's technical sustainability is assured by the way it has inserted itself inside the operation of indigenous organizations and DIPEIBs by encouraging the formation of local technical teams, resident in each area. These professional bodies represented a "nucleus" whose organizational and technical skills have been strengthened and which, provided certain financial limitations are resolved and satisfactory lines of institutional responsibility are established, could continue project activities once the project is over. The existence of trained staff also means the project can be reproduced in new localities.

The project's social sustainability is ensured by its enthusiastic acceptance by children and adolescents, parents, communities, indigenous organizations, and state and civil society institutions. The high level of project ownership by indigenous organizations and training of local teachers encourages social and technical sustainability of project actions. These organizations, school staff, and some community members are motivated to promote indigenous children's and adolescents' education and have a growing awareness of the negative effects of child labor on children's education and lives.

The project's political sustainability is served by the fact that the *Plan Decenal de Educación* (Ten-Year Education Plan), *Agenda Social sobre la Niñez* (Social Agenda for Childhood), *Fondo de Protección Especial del INNFA* (Special Protection Fund of the National Institute for Childhood and the Family), and *Proyecto de Erradicación de la Mendicidad en el Corredor*

Andino (Project to Eradicate Begging in the Andean Corridor) contain goals and objectives analogous to those of the project; this could encourage the incorporation of project strategies into Ecuadorian state educational initiatives. Recent governmental provisions, aimed at extending educational services in all the country's schools up to basic cycle level and hiring a significant number of new teachers, represent opportunities that could be exploited in a useful and timely fashion for state implementation of project activities as a strategy for encouraging educational reintegration and eradicating child labor within the institutional framework of the Ministry of Education. Linking the project to the Ten-Year Education Plan would contribute to this goal.

The project's financial sustainability is the most important critical aspect to resolve. Concerning its financial sustainability, the project is successfully mobilizing the support of governmental agencies regarding extending/reproducing project activities in new areas. Thus, for example, the project has succeeded in securing the interest of INNFA and is negotiating for its support in both the Sierra and Amazon areas. In addition, for the first time, small amounts of support have been received from some private companies, like Diners Club. Some municipalities and other organizations are beginning to offer contributions to schools in which the project is active (e.g., Loreto).

Regarding factors favoring financial sustainability, wages and salaries paid by the project to teachers and technicians are similar to those paid in the public sector, meaning this sum is unlikely to represent an obstacle to the payments being taken over by the state at a later date. However, the project also includes a series of other things (e.g., educational materials for the children, pedagogical materials for schools, guidebooks, teacher-training programs, daily food costs for the children and adolescents) that, although a bonus for the beneficiaries, are not part (at least not of the sums the project invests in each school) of DIPEIB's regular budgets.⁷ DINEIB currently does not have a budget to take over project costs. However, it is considering including some of these areas in its 2008 Strategic Plan.

It may be that the project's long-term, true sustainability, at both technical and financial levels, depends on project initiatives being incorporated into State Education Policy, project activity extending into the Hispanic system, and its teachers' salary costs being largely assumed by the Ministry of Education budget, even if this is initially achieved by transferring special funds from MIES or INNFA.

⁷ In addition, it would be difficult for the Extended Timetable model to go on to be funded by the Ministry of Education, given that it is not regarded as part of the current educational system, unlike Primary Education and Basic Cycle.

V LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

5.1 LESSONS LEARNED

The following aspects stand out as lessons learned from project implementation:

- a. The prestige and previous experience of the implementing institution represent important factors that, from both a technical and institutional leadership perspective, could facilitate expansion to and ownership of the intervention model by other institutional parties.
- b. Developing actions aimed at solving the problem of school dropout, academic delay and educational over-age in rural areas tends to create expectations in other populations/schools and a demand from other communities to be included in the project. Given that financial resources to meet such unforeseen demands are limited, it is advisable for projects of this type to include additional, initially unallocated funds in their design in order to meet this type of demand toward the second or third year.
- c. Potential and sudden changes of Educational Authorities could delay the implementation and/or continuity of project activities, as has happened in some cases with this project; therefore, projects of this type should have systems prepared for the rapid and timely sensitization of new authorities, in case such changes occur.
- d. The level of involvement and interest in project activities by supervisory staff from state institutions that are project counterparts (e.g., DIPEIBs in Ecuador's case) may be very varied, which influences, to a greater or lesser degree, technical sustainability in each area. For example, there are marked differences in involvement, knowledge, and appreciation of the project between supervisors in Cotopaxi and Tungurahua (the former have had more limited contact with the project and field), which could influence results in the midterm. Although the project is already active in this field, it is suggested that greater effort be made to involve DIPEIB supervisory staff, with a view to encouraging greater direct contact between them, the schools and the project.
- e. Tungurahua's educational networking model represents a scheme favoring the project's introduction into the area and its coordination with DIPEIB supervisory structures.
- f. In addition to limited educational quality and unsatisfactory institutional services at the *bachillerato* (high school diploma) level, family poverty, limited awareness of the importance of education, early marriage, and other factors prevent more adolescents from continuing their studies toward the *bachillerato*.

- g. Difficulties at Colegio Chaquiñán High School, where the project has still not been implemented, highlight the role played by local leadership and beneficiaries' proactivity, and technical and organizational skills in the success of projects like *Wiñari*.⁸
- h. Political problems between communities and indigenous organizations may have a negative impact on the project.⁹ Mechanisms should be established to protect project technical decisionmaking (which depends not only on indigenous organizations, but also DIPEIBs) from political factors that could affect children's and adolescents' educational security.
- i. Projects of this type should maintain a certain margin of autonomy in implementing its own program of activities in relation to those of other institutions. Establishing an alliance with an NGO in Kisapincha (KNH [*Kindernothilfe*]) to jointly develop the project in this canton meant that, when the latter withdrew from the area because of difficulties with indigenous organizations, the project collapsed.

5.2 GOOD PRACTICES

The following aspects of the project represent good, reproducible practices for similar programs:

- a. Using satisfactory criteria to select beneficiary communities, such as the percentage of over-age students or school dropout rates, the poverty level, and the presence of significant numbers of child and adolescent workers. Selecting communities/schools in which to develop the project on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program's goals (child labor, over-age children, school dropout, poverty, etc.).
- b. Establishing a baseline survey prior to starting the project.
- c. Developing the project's educational alternatives within, rather than outside, the framework of formal education, thereby encouraging the institutionalization and sustainability of implemented schemes.

⁸ Colegio Chaquiñán High School seems to be less organized operationally and to have a lesser/slower staff response capability. It has had administrative problems and, until recently, lacked internal procedures. It did not have a curriculum or specialty graduate job profile. All this has been worked on by the project, but slowly, because of the school's internal difficulties. Unlike Colegio Ávila High School, Chaquiñán is a part-time campus (until recently it only operated on Saturdays and Sundays) and has a mix of adult and adolescent students. The lack of definition and decisiveness has made it difficult to move ahead with other types of investments, such as installing laboratories for specialties. With difficulty (the adult beneficiary population didn't want it because they were working), one more day has been added to the schedule (Fridays). But this is not enough. They estimate it will take a couple of years to become a satisfactory full-time campus. By comparing interviews with staff from Ávila de Loreto School and those from Colegio Chaquiñán School, it can be seen that, beyond the speech making, the former group has greater drive and capacity to deliver.

⁹ For example, after the community of Balsayacu disaffiliated from FONAKIN in May 2007 to form a new indigenous organization, Project *Wiñari*, which is linked to FONAKIN, ceased its activities in that community during the 2007–2008 school year.

- d. Adapting/reconciling project curricular initiatives with content and initiatives being considered by the public education system (e.g. adapting MOSEIB [Model for Intercultural Bilingual Education], adapting INNFA's "Avanzar" ["Move Forward"] initiative, etc.).
- e. Establishing mechanisms for educational and remedial analysis prior to reintegrating children into schools.
- f. Strengthening educational quality and school services, either by training teachers, providing work materials, equipping classrooms, providing food, or improving technical specialties in high schools.
- g. Validating educational initiatives through joint work with DINEIB technicians, as well as seeking endorsement of students' achievements from the Ministry of Education.
- h. Founding the project on active and central participation by indigenous organizations in design, management, and evaluation, which created a high level of ownership within such groups.
- i. Creating a wide network of institutional alliances with state and private sectors and civil society represents a significant contributory factor in promoting the growing sustainability of projects of this type.
- j. Expanding and focusing project efforts on the subject of trafficking indigenous children for begging purposes in Tungurahua province represents an opportunity to validate the model in new contexts.
- k. Although it is too early to evaluate results, implementing a host family system in Loreto at Colegio Ávila High School has solved a significant problem and met a need for children who have to travel large distances to get to school.¹⁰ The host family model represents a low-cost scheme that USDOL could suggest as an alternative in the development of similar projects in other, principally tropical, countries, since such difficulties (barriers to secondary education caused by the distance between an area's only technical school and the surrounding communities) are common to several countries.

¹⁰ This low-cost alternative allows students to continue studies that would otherwise be seriously affected by distance, and has an obvious effect on eradicating risky labor among adolescent beneficiaries. Host families provide lodging in exchange for a reasonable monthly payment (US\$10), academic support for younger family members from hosted students, and some payment in kind from parents of the guest students. A project cook provides food daily.

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VI CONCLUSIONS

Project *Wiñari* represents a successful experiment in addressing the problem of school dropout and over-age in child workers in Ecuador's indigenous sectors. The project has, to date, achieved the majority of its original objectives and goals. Educational initiatives implemented by the project have made a significant contribution to improving educational quality in schools in which it is active, and have also facilitated the transition toward school, reintegration, and educational progress of child and adolescent beneficiaries.

Project *Wiñari* has contributed significantly to raising the profile of child labor in the indigenous sector, a subject that has not been dealt with by institutions responsible for child welfare in Ecuador by pushing for its addition to the agendas of indigenous organizations, *state* institutions, and civil society organizations. Project implementation has been based on an intrinsically participatory management scheme. The scheme has contributed significantly to empowering local authorities and organizations and has succeeded in involving organizations representing the beneficiary population (e.g., indigenous organizations) and major public and civil society institutions (DINEIB, INNFA, and others). The interinstitutional cooperative network developed by the project represents another of the project's significant strengths.

Through various policies, the project has made progress in creating a model to address the subject of eradicating child labor in the indigenous population. Although the majority of the project's child beneficiaries continue to carry out some form of labor activity, to date, Project *Wiñari* has had noticeable effects on reducing both the number of hours children work and the number of indigenous child beneficiaries (mainly living in rural areas) working above a threshold of 28 hours per week. However, its effect on child labor of a dangerous nature remains limited. The project should have a more precise definition of this concept and outline a media communication and direct intervention strategy around children, parents, and communities that goes beyond what is already happening in the educational field. This strategy would allow the project to focus its efforts on *eradicating* the most dangerous labor activities carried out by children and adolescents and focus on the provinces/areas where the majority of such activities take place.

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VII RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 AT THE PROJECT DESIGN LEVEL

Without losing sight of the need to eliminate certain *harmful conditions* related to child labor (long working days, nonattendance at school, etc.) or to combat certain negative factors not exclusively linked to child labor (carrying out domestic tasks over long working days, ill-treatment or abuse of children), this project's concept of "dangerous labor" should be more detailed and precise regarding *specific forms of intrinsically dangerous labor activity*, which could mean focusing on the most serious and potentially lethal activities and *drawing a distinction between labor and domestic spheres*.

Although the project carried out regional consultations and has systematized criteria regarding dangerous activities from the beneficiaries' perspective, it is important to analyze and grade these so that the classification has greater consistency. The project should choose a fixed number of labor activities (going beyond mere labor *conditions*) to be the object of focused, *prioritized*, interinstitutional, and potentially "personalized" actions (through home visits or community actions) aimed at eradicating them. Such actions, focused on the most dangerous forms of child labor, would complement existing general actions that are in favor of promoting education and reducing child labor. In general, specific risks associated with certain activities should be more clearly addressed in the provinces where they occur most commonly, and direct actions should be focused on provinces at higher risk.

Regarding the concept of "prevention," it is suggested that USDOL review the way it has been defining this concept. In the quest for better internal consistency of the model used, given that followup regarding eradication is carried out by cohort, it would be advisable for "prevented" children and adolescents to be followed up in the same way or, alternatively, to be categorized toward the end of the project.

7.2 AT THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL

7.2.1 In Relation to the Field of Education

It is important that, during the second half of its implementation, the project strengthen its ties with the Hispanic educational system, seek the latter's acceptance and potential adaptation of curricular initiatives and materials validated in the EIB system, and apply project methodology in a significant number of schools in the Hispanic system (potentially in an urban setting) that have a high number of indigenous children and/or are located in areas with a high indigenous population.

It is suggested that greater effort be made to involve DIPEIB supervisory staff with a view to encouraging greater direct contact between them, the schools, and the project. Tungurahua's educational networking model represents a scheme favoring the project's introduction into the intervention area and its coordination with DIPEIB supervisory structures; for this reason, a suggestion to DINEIB to promote project implementation in other provinces should be considered.

The task of introducing child labor into EIB's curriculum remains outstanding. This action would normally take place during the second half of the project. It would also be advisable to include the subject of sex education in the curricula of Accelerated Primary Education and/or Abbreviated Basic Cycle.

Project *Wiñari* has implemented its methodology in a semi-urban school in Quito and another in Tena with a view to validating project methodology in an urban setting. However, in practical terms, there are fewer EIB schools with a majority of indigenous children in Quito, since the majority of these children study in Hispanic system schools. In order to validate the project's model for eradicating child labor in the indigenous population in an urban setting, it would be advisable to select a certain number of schools that have a population of at least 30 percent indigenous children and over-age children who are both indigenous and of Hispanic origin.

It would be advisable to realistically evaluate the feasibility of achieving, in the time remaining to the project, successful implementation of planned activities in Colegio Chaquiñán High School. Alternatively, less money could be invested in this school and, in its place, invest in initiatives in other high schools (for example, Illagua Chico High School in Tungurahua, which has good structure and performance) or strengthen the operation of workshops left behind by KNH (*Kindernothilfe*) in Kisapincha.

Finally, given that good working relations exist between DyA and INNFA, and that there are several cases in communities and schools of orphaned or abandoned children, children living in extreme poverty, or children with learning difficulties or cognitive and sensory limitations of variable severity, it would be advisable for Project *Wiñari* to explore the possibility of INNFA offering financial and specialized technical support for children and adolescents with special needs.

7.2.2 At the Level of Raising Awareness Among Social Parties Regarding Eradicating Dangerous Child Labor

The project needs to reformulate its communication strategy, perhaps hiring the services of an organization specializing in the formulation of local, culturally adapted educational campaigns via the mass media.

Whereas the objective of raising awareness of the harmful nature of child labor among indigenous organization leaders, school principals, and teachers seems to have been successful, actions directed at parents, children, and adolescents should be strengthened through local mass media (broadcasting specific *spots* on local radio); content regarding child labor should be introduced into Accelerated Primary Education and Abbreviated Basic Cycle curricula. Also, preventive activities regarding child labor should be introduced to Extended Timetable and printed materials and direct awareness-raising actions should be employed on children and adults in the community.

It would be advisable to stratify project objectives and communications on this matter into the following areas, which could either be worked together or independently, depending on each province's problems:¹¹

- Eradicating a certain number of particularly dangerous labor activities and other similar activities of a domestic nature¹² *according to their nature*—in compliance with Convention 182. A gradation of dangers can be drawn up by the project: for example, activities involving using machetes or gasoline, fumigating crops, using shotguns, fishing using explosives, working in bars and karaoke clubs, and similar kinds of work.
- Reducing the number of hours generally worked by children and adolescents, particularly children under 12 years of age (without including home-based domestic tasks under this heading); i.e., eliminating *harmful labor conditions* (excessive hours, night work, etc.).
- Ensuring that children under 12 years of age (or 15) do not undertake labor activities, except for light domestic tasks (in compliance with Convention 138); i.e., to delay the age at which children begin working for as long as possible, even if achieving this objective, in the context of rural poverty, may clearly be difficult.

7.3 AT THE MONITORING LEVEL

Alongside continuing to record the reduction in the number of hours worked by children, it is necessary, in order to better categorize and address the most dangerous forms of child labor, to single these out within the monitoring system, grading them in order to differentiate them from the least dangerous forms of labor; distinguish labor activities from home-based domestic tasks; distinguish the *specific harmful nature* of each labor activity (e.g., potential damage intrinsic to the activity) from the harmful nature of the *conditions* under which any activity is carried out (e.g., excessive working hours, night work, obstacles to school attendance); and differentiate the harmful nature of the activity from other negative social conditions that are not necessarily associated exclusively with labor (ill-treatment, physical or psychological abuse, exposure to street living, etc.).

It is suggested that collecting data on children's and adolescents' labor status be carried out on a minimum quarterly basis and that feedback from the national monitoring system be offered rapidly to local project teams and, from these, onto schools and communities; in this way, better focusing and refining of actions on child labor can be carried out in each area (e.g., conducting visits/designing specific actions for high-risk cases in certain communities).

It is advisable to move toward greater involvement of indigenous organizations and communities in monitoring labor activities within their own communities. In this context, although it will involve higher costs and greater effort, it would be important for the project to establish a followup system (direct or through community monitors) to track, over an extended period, children and adolescents who complete an educational initiative but do not subsequently stay at school.

¹¹ As previously mentioned, analysis of children's labor activities showed that different provinces have different dangerous activities and present different levels of risk.

¹² In practical terms, some activities undertaken by children fit into a common group where child labor overlapped with domestic tasks (i.e., activities that fit equally well into the spheres of labor and home life).

It is suggested that the monitoring system feature that measures attitudinal change include parents', community authorities', and teachers'/school principals' attitudes toward the proposal to *immediately prevent children* from participating in certain, specific, high-risk labor activities (fumigation; use of machetes, shotguns, explosives, and others).

It is recommended that an annual *comparative* analysis be carried out on project direct beneficiaries' enrollment, and retention and completion rates, compared to total student numbers and/or the group of indirect beneficiaries.

In order to establish the effects of "Extended Timetable" more precisely on the number of hours children work, it is recommended that, during the 2007–2008 school year, the project undertake a group control study on this subject (in project schools where Extended Timetable is active and in other, similar schools in the same areas where it is not). It is suggested that results be analyzed by age range. The need to examine this matter more deeply stems from the fact that, at the beginning of the program, only 16 percent of enrolled beneficiaries were working an excessive number of hours (greater than 28 hours per week), 20 percent were not working, and 64 percent were working less than 28 hours per week (which was consistent with the fact that 72 percent of program beneficiaries were under the age of 12 years, and this group works, on average, fewer hours).

Moreover, it is recommended that, as part of the project, a small, comparative study be conducted with a control group made up of students from other schools in each province, in order to establish how many beneficiaries go on to study for their *bachillerato* (high school diploma) once they have completed Basic Cycle, and the project's potential effects in this area. These two research projects are considered important in order to better distinguish the effects of the *Wiñari* model on beneficiaries' situations.

7.4 AT THE MANAGEMENT LEVEL

It is suggested that the way in which relations between DyA and World Learning are internally organized be reviewed and a clearer separation be made between World Learning's supervisory and monitoring functions and DyA's technical coordination, local implementation and administrative functions.

It is recommended that, in order to avoid conflicts of interest while working for the project, no one on the technical team (including local technicians) simultaneously occupy a political position within an indigenous organization.

7.5 ACHIEVING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND PROJECT REPRODUCTION IN NEW COMMUNITIES

It is important for Project *Wiñari* to redouble its interlocutory efforts with MIES, INNFA, and the Ministry of Education in order to ensure its alternative educational initiatives for over-age children become established as part of the national strategy for promoting education and eradicating dangerous child labor.

The project's educational initiatives should be incorporated as a special educational initiative for *temporary implementation* in certain, specified geographic areas and communities that have significant problems with over-age children and/or school dropout related to child labor. The announcement that the government has hired 12,000 new teachers nationally could represent an opportunity to speed up this process by promoting the creation, within the Ministry, of a small unit assuming technical responsibility for implementing these special educational initiatives.

Project *Wiñari*'s diversification of sources of funding for reproducing the project in other parts of the country (by INNFA and other institutions) represents an interesting strategy for a short-term increase in project coverage, but should not replace progressive institutionalization of the implementation of project initiatives by the Ministry of Education and DINEIB. It should be noted that MIES contributes resources toward developing special projects by DINEIB and/or (temporarily) INNFA. Ideally, and regardless of whether INNFA is involved in the implementation of initiatives like Accelerated Primary Education or Abbreviated Basic Cycle, it is important that DINEIB itself take responsibility for these. INNFA would be an ally in actions to eradicate child labor, and could assume responsibility for implementing the "Extended Timetable" module, which is not currently under consideration as an education system initiative. In the midterm, INNFA would represent a more permanent interlocutor, "outside" the state, that could replace DyA's role regarding indigenous child labor once Project *Wiñari* is over.

With a view to reinforcing the importance and raising the profile of child labor in the indigenous sector, it would be advisable to integrate the subject into more general plans and policies related to the indigenous population, and to seek the participation of an indigenous organization representative on the National Committee for the Progressive Eradication of Child Labor (CONEPTI).

Likewise, with a view to promoting greater state involvement in the subject of child labor in the indigenous sector, it would be important for Project *Wiñari* staff to directly coordinate preventive actions in the field with child labor inspectors from the Ministry of Labor and Employment.

Finally, it would be advisable for Project *Wiñari*'s experience to be formulated into a guidebook that would allow replication of the project and/or some of its educational programs by other institutions, particularly in view of the upcoming implementation of a similar project by DyA in Bolivia.